UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.109/L.1855
10 January 1997

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION
WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING
OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL
COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

ORGANIZATION OF WORK: RELEVANT RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Note by the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The attention of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples is drawn to the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly at its fifty-first session, listed in sections II and III below, which are relevant to the work of the Special Committee in 1997.

II. GENERAL RESOLUTIONS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

2. The Special Committee was established by the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 1654 (XVI) of 27 November 1961. The Special Committee was requested to examine the application of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, contained in Assembly resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960, and to make suggestions and recommendations on the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration.

3. By its resolution 1970 (XVIII) of 16 December 1963, the General Assembly decided to dissolve the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, and requested the Special Committee to study the information transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations.

4. At the same session and at each subsequent session, the General Assembly, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[1] has adopted a resolution renewing the mandate of the Special Committee.

5. At its thirty-fifth session, the General Assembly, on the basis of a recommendation of the Special Committee, adopted resolution 35/118 of 11 December 1980, the annex to which contains the Plan of Action for the Full Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.

6. At its forty-third session, the General Assembly adopted resolution 43/47 of 22 November 1988, by which it declared the period 1990-2000 the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

7. At its forty-sixth session, the General Assembly, in its resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991, adopted as a Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism the proposals contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General dated 13 December 1991 (A/46/634/Rev.1). The Plan, inter alia, contained the following provisions:

> "22. The Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, should:

"(a) Prepare periodic analyses of the progress and extent of the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in each Territory;

"(b) Review the impact of the economic and social situation on the constitutional and political advancement of Non-Self-Governing Territories;

"(c) Organize during the Decade seminars in the Caribbean and Pacific regions alternately, as well as at United Nations Headquarters, to review the progress achieved in the implementation of the plan of action, with the participation of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories, their elected representatives, the administering Powers, Member States, regional organizations, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and experts.

"23. The Special Committee should continue to seek, as a matter of priority, the full cooperation of administering Powers with regard to the dispatch of United Nations visiting missions to Non-Self-Governing Territories.

"24. The Special Committee, with the cooperation of the administering Powers, should make every effort to facilitate and encourage the participation of representatives of Non-Self-Governing Territories in regional and international organizations, as well as in the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the Special Committee itself and other United Nations decolonization bodies."

8. At its fifty-first session, after considering the report of the Special Committee,[2] the General Assembly adopted resolution 51/146 of 13 December 1996 in which it, inter alia:

"5. Approves the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples covering its work during 1996, including the programme of work envisaged for 1997;[3]

"...

"11. Requests the Special Committee to continue to seek suitable means for the immediate and full implementation of the Declaration and to carry out those actions approved by the General Assembly regarding the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism in all Territories that have not yet exercised their right to self-determination, including independence, and in particular:

"(a) To formulate specific proposals for the elimination of the remaining manifestations of colonialism and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session;

"(b) To continue to examine the implementation by Member States of resolution 1514 (XV) and other relevant resolutions on decolonization;

"(c) To continue to pay special attention to the small Territories, in particular through the dispatch of regular visiting missions, and to recommend to the General Assembly the most suitable steps to be taken to enable the populations of those Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and independence;

"(d) To take all necessary steps to enlist worldwide support among Governments, as well as national and international organizations, for the achievement of the objectives of the Declaration and the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the United Nations;

"12. Calls upon the administering Powers to continue to cooperate with the Special Committee in the discharge of its mandate and to receive visiting missions to the Territories to secure first-hand information and to ascertain the wishes and aspirations of their inhabitants;

"13. Also calls upon the administering Powers that have not participated in the work of the Special Committee to do so at its 1997 session".

9. By a letter dated 26 July 1996 addressed to the Acting Chairman of the Special Committee (A/AC.109/2068), the Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations informed the Acting Chairman of the decision of the Government of Afghanistan to terminate its membership in the Special Committee as from that date. On 9 August 1996, the Acting Chairman transmitted the above-mentioned letter to the President of the General Assembly for appropriate action.

10. As at 1 January 1997, the Special Committee was composed of the following 22 members: Chile, China, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Ethiopia, Fiji, Grenada, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Mali, Papua New Guinea, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Syrian Arab Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela and Yugoslavia. The membership in 1996 of the subsidiary bodies of the Special Committee is given in the annex to the present document.

III. RESOLUTIONS, CONSENSUSES AND DECISIONS CONCERNING SPECIFIC ITEMS CONSIDERED BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE IN 1996

11. As mentioned in section II above, the General Assembly adopted resolution 51/146 on the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The Assembly also adopted eight other resolutions, one consensus and three decisions relating to specific items considered by the Special Committee in 1996 which are listed below. Members will wish to take them into account in drawing up the Special Committee's programme of work for 1997.

12. On the recommendation of its Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), the General Assembly decided to defer consideration of the matter relating to the Non-Self-Governing Territories of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam,

Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands until March 1997.

A. Resolutions, consensuses and decisions concerning specific Territories

1. Resolutions

Territory	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Western Sahara	51/143	13 December 1996
New Caledonia	51/144	13 December 1996
Tokelau	51/145	13 December 1996

2. Consensuses

Territory	Decision number	Date of adoption
Gibraltar	51/429*	13 December 1996

3. Decisions

Territory	Decision number	Date of adoption
East Timor	51/402*	20 September 1996
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	51/406*	25 October 1996

B. Resolutions concerning other items

Title	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations	51/139	13 December 1996
Activities of foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination	51/140	13 December 1996

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* Provisional number.

Title	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations	51/141	13 December 1996
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories	51/142	13 December 1996
Dissemination of information on decolonization	51/147	13 December 1996

C. Decision concerning other questions

Title	Decision number	Date of adoption
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration	51/426*	13 December 1996

IV. OTHER RESOLUTIONS RELEVANT TO THE WORK OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE

13. Other resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session that are relevant to the work of the Special Committee are listed below:

Title	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	51/2	17 October 1996
Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States	51/4	24 October 1996

* Provisional number.

Title	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee	51/11	4 November 1996
Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community	51/16	11 November 1996
Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference	51/18	14 November 1996
Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic	51/19	14 November 1996
Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States	51/20	19 November 1996
Law of the Sea	51/34	9 December 1996
Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks	51/35	9 December 1996
Large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing: unauthorized fishing in zones of national jurisdiction; and fisheries by-catch and discards	51/36	9 December 1996
International action to combat drug abuse and illicit production and trafficking	51/64	12 December 1996
Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women	51/68	12 December 1996

Title	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action	51/69	12 December 1996
Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa	51/71	12 December 1996
International Decade of the World's Indigenous People	51/78	12 December 1996
Measures to combat contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance	51/79	12 December 1996
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination	51/80	12 December 1996
Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination	51/81	12 December 1996
Use of mercenaries as a means of violating human rights and impeding the exercise of the right of peoples to self-determination	51/83	12 December 1996
Universal realization of the right of peoples to self-determination	51/84	12 December 1996
Effective promotion of the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities	51/91	12 December 1996
Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions	51/92	12 December 1996
Right to development	51/99	12 December 1996

Title	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action	51/118	12 December 1996
Questions relating to information	51/138 A and B	13 December 1996
Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity	51/151	13 December 1996
Implementation of the commitments and policies agreed upon in the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade	51/173	16 December 1996
Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development	51/176	16 December 1996
Implementation of the outcome of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)	51/177	16 December 1996
Convention on biological diversity	51/182	16 December 1996
Implementation of the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States	51/183	16 December 1996
Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind	51/184	16 December 1996
International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction	51/185	16 December 1996

Title	Resolution number	Date of adoption
Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social development	51/202	17 December 1996
Pattern of conferences	51/211 A to E	18 December 1996
Programme planning	51/219	18 December 1996
Proposed budget outline for the biennium 1998-1999	51/220	18 December 1996
Questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997	51/221 A and B	18 December 1996
Programme budget for the biennium for 1996-1997	51/222 A to C	18 December 1996

Notes

[1] See the reports of the Special Committee submitted to the General Assembly at its eighteenth to fifty-first sessions. For the most recent, see Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/48/23); ibid., Forty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/49/23); ibid., Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/50/23); and ibid., Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/51/23).

[2] A/51/23 (Parts I-VIII); to be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/51/23).

[3] A/51/23 (Part I), chap. I, sect. J; to be issued in Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/51/23).

Annex

MEMBERSHIP OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE IN 1996

Working Group[a]

Committee officers:

Sierra Leone (Chairman)[b]
Cuba (Vice-Chairman)
Papua New Guinea (Vice-Chairman)[b]
Syrian Arab Republic (Rapporteur)

Officers of the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance:

Papua New Guinea (Chairman)[b]
Trinidad and Tobago (Rapporteur)[b]

Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance

Includes all the members of the Special Committee[c]

Notes

[a] At its 1449th meeting, on 14 July 1995, the Special Committee approved the recommendation to make the Working Group open-ended to the members of the Special Committee.

[b] Upon the departure of the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations in May 1996, the Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations became the Acting Chairman of the Committee while the representative of Trinidad and Tobago became the Acting Chairman/Rapporteur of the Subcommittee.

[c] See para. 10 of the present report.

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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Note by the Chairman

1. Subsidiary bodies

1. Having regard to the expected workload of the Special Committee for the current session and in order to consider the question of decolonization with an innovative approach and to ensure transparency of work, it is suggested that the meetings of the Bureau of the Special Committee be open-ended.

2. With regard to the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance, it may be recalled that in 1996 the Special Committee considered the question of integration of the Subcommittee with the Special Committee on the basis of the recommendation contained in the 103rd report of the Working Group (A/AC.109/L.1852). The relevant paragraph of that report reads as follows:

> "15. The Working Group may recall that the proposal for integration, which was made by the delegation of Papua New Guinea, was discussed by the Open-ended Working Group of the Special Committee on 29 March 1996. It was felt that, for further consideration, the delegation of Papua New Guinea should prepare a written proposal comparing the mandates and functions of the Special Committee and of its subsidiary body. The delegation of Papua New Guinea submitted the written proposal on the question of integration. The Working Group addressed the issue and decided to recommend to the Special Committee that it defer any action in this regard until further examination of the proposal during the next session of the Special Committee, in 1997."

3. At its 1464th meeting, the Special Committee approved the recommendation.

4. The Acting Chairman suggests that the Special Committee take up, early in the session, the question of integration of the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance with the Special Committee. The general thrust of this proposal will help streamline the work of the Committee, avoid duplication and enhance its efficiency.

2. Allocation of items and procedure for consideration

5. Annexed to the present note is a list of pending matters for consideration by the Special Committee during the year, together with an indication of the procedure that the Committee may wish to adopt.

6. The Special Committee should take into account the resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session that are relevant to the work of the Committee, as listed in the note by the Secretary-General (A/AC.109/L.1855). It is also understood that they should continue to be guided by the relevant provisions of the resolution adopted by the Assembly on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary of the Declaration (resolution 45/33 of 20 November 1990), as well as the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, adopted by the Assembly in its resolution 46/181 of 19 December 1991 on the basis of proposals contained in the annex to the report of the Secretary-General on the Decade (A/46/634/Rev.1).

7. As the Committee is aware, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) decided to defer consideration of the matter relating to the questions of small Territories until March 1997, which was confirmed by the General Assembly at its 83rd plenary meeting, on 13 December 1996. Pending the outcome of the consultations between the Special Committee and some administering Powers with good offices of the Chairman of the Fourth Committee, the Special Committee should take into account the developments related to those consultations in its work during the current session.

8. The Acting Chairman draws the attention of the Committee to the annex to the present note, which contains no indication as to the allocation of the items, which will be taken at the Committee's plenary and/or in the Subcommittee on Small Territories, Petitions, Information and Assistance, pending a decision of the Special Committee on whether to integrate the Subcommittee with the Special Committee.

3. Order of priority for consideration of items

9. The Chairman will hold consultations with regard to the order of priority to be given for consideration of items in plenary meetings.

10. It is also his intention to hold consultations on specific activities envisaged under the Plan of Action for the International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism.

11. In the meantime, subject to the availability of the working papers prepared by the Secretariat, it is suggested that the Special Committee conduct its substantive work in accordance with the schedule of meetings approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-first session (A/51/23 (Part I), chap. I, para. 52).

4. Recommendations of the Special Committee to the General Assembly

12. In accordance with paragraph 31 of General Assembly decision 34/401 of 29 November 1979, and in the light of past experience, it is suggested that the Special Committee continue to follow the procedure adopted at its 1982 session[1] in connection with the formulation of its recommendations to the Assembly at its fifty-second session.

5. Utilization of conference-servicing resources

13. At its fifty-first session, the General Assembly decided to waive rules 67 and 108 of its rules of procedure in order to permit meetings to be declared open and debates to proceed without the presence of the quorum required under those rules. The Assembly also decided that morning meetings should begin at 10 a.m.

14. As those measures have further enhanced the effective utilization of conference-servicing resources, it is suggested that the Special Committee continue to follow the same procedure. It should be understood that, in accordance with the rules cited, the presence of a majority of members would continue to be required for any decisions to be taken.

Notes

[1] See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 23 (A/37/23/Rev.1), chap. I, paras. 60-69.

Annex

PENDING MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE DURING 1997

Question	Procedure for consideration
East Timor	As a separate item
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	"
Gibraltar	"
New Caledonia	"
Western Sahara	"
Special Committee decision of 15 August 1991 concerning Puerto Rico (A/51/23 (Part I), chap. I, para. 41)	As appropriate
Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories transmitted under Article 73 e of the Charter of the United Nations and related questions (General Assembly resolution 51/139)	As a separate item
Activities of foreign economic and other interests which impede the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples in Territories under colonial domination (General Assembly resolution 51/140)	"
Military activities and arrangements by colonial Powers in Territories under their administration (General Assembly decision 51/426[a])	"
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations (General Assembly resolution 51/141)	"

[a] Tentative number.

Question	Procedure for consideration
American Samoa	As a separate item
Anguilla	"
Bermuda	"
British Virgin Islands	"
Cayman Islands	"
Guam	"
Montserrat	"
Pitcairn	"
St. Helena	"
Tokelau	"
Turks and Caicos Islands	"
United States Virgin Islands	"
International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism (General Assembly resolution 46/181 and report of the Secretary-General (A/46/634/Rev.1, annex))	As appropriate
Question of holding a series of meetings away from Headquarters	"
Question of the list of Territories to which the Declaration is applicable	"
Pattern of conferences (General Assembly resolution 51/211)	"
Question of sending visiting missions to Territories (para. 12 of General Assembly resolution 51/146)	"
Dissemination of information on decolonization (General Assembly resolution 51/147)	"
Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of All Colonial Territories	"

Question	Procedure for consideration
Matters relating to the small Territories (para. 11 (c) of General Assembly resolution 51/146)	To be taken into consideration in the examination of specific Territories
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (art. 15 of the Convention)	"
Offers by Member States of study and training facilities for inhabitants of Non-Self-Governing Territories (General Assembly resolution 51/142)	"
Compliance of Member States with the Declaration and other relevant resolutions on decolonization (para. 11 (b) of General Assembly resolution 51/146)	"